

GUIDE TO CASE PLANNING

What is the Concern?

COMPONENTS

- ❖ A description of parental behavior that puts the child at risk
- ❖ A description of how the parental behavior affects the children

TIPS FOR WRITING

- Group each main underlying RC with the related RCs it impacts.
- Keep in mind that more than one main underlying RC can impact other RCs (Ex. Substance abuse and Mental Health can both affect Parenting Practices).
- Parenting Practices should usually be grouped with other RCs.

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ✓ Have you written about facts, not conjecture?
- ✓ Are your concern statements specific to the family?
- ✓ Will the family understand what you have written?
- ✓ Is the statement written in behaviorally observable terms?
- ✓ Have you conveyed the seriousness of the situation without being judgmental or derogatory?

EXAMPLES

- ✚ Mike's use of heroin and prescription pain pills prevents him from providing care and supervision to Samson and Anna. For example, police found Samson and Anna outside without supervision or adequate clothing.
- ✚ Cheryl's untreated schizophrenia prevents her from providing food and supervision for Shanna and Elise. Shanna, age 7, has been caught stealing food multiple times from the local supermarket to feed herself and Elise, age 4. Shanna and Elise are often left unsupervised for days during Cheryl's paranoid phases in which she barricades herself in her bedroom.

What Behavior will need to Change?

COMPONENTS

- ❖ A description of the needed behavioral change
- ❖ A description of specific expected results of the behavior change, and the positive effects on the children

TIPS FOR WRITING

FIRST SENTENCE: A general description of the needed change

SECOND SENTENCE: The change will result in:

BULLETED LIST:

Outcomes, always including parents' behaviors, related to the concern and care of the children

- Use behaviorally observable terms.
- Describe desired improvements in attitude, knowledge, mental health in terms of the resulting behavioral changes.
- Use bullets rather than long sentences or paragraphs, they are easier to read.

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ✓ Have you identified what behavior must change?
- ✓ Did you engage the family?
- ✓ Is the language clear and written in family-friendly language?
- ✓ Is there a clear description of behavioral changes that should result from improvements in behavior, attitude, mental health, or knowledge?
- ✓ Is it clear how the change in behavior will protect the children?

EXAMPLES

- ✚ Mr. Watson will manage depression symptoms, which include sleeping, withdrawal from life activities, and self-medicating. He will:
 - Provide unimpaired supervision of the children.
 - Be awake when the children are awake.
 - Provide meals for the children.
- ✚ Heidi will learn and use coping mechanisms that have a positive impact on her children. She will:
 - Provide appropriate caregivers in her absence.
 - Not become impaired by alcohol when caring for her children.
 - Use non-physical discipline techniques.

Family Activities	Caseworker/Service Team Activities
<p style="text-align: center;">COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The activity the family must complete to make the desired behavior change ❖ Which family member is responsible for completing the activity ❖ When the activity should be completed 	<p style="text-align: center;">COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Direct service, case management, advocacy activities the caseworker will perform ❖ Activities other service providers will perform
<p style="text-align: center;">TIPS FOR WRITING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use step-by-step detail that will help the family reduce the risk of maltreatment. ➤ Utilize activities that build on, or enhance the family's strengths. ➤ Sequence the activities so the most important ones are completed first. ➤ Include activities that can occur concurrently, when appropriate. ➤ Be transparent: include non-negotiable activities (e.g. drug screens). ➤ When necessary, include the rationale for the activity. 	<p style="text-align: center;">TIPS FOR WRITING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Include how the caseworker will monitor completion of case plan activities and progress towards behavior change. ➤ Explicitly state activities that correspond the family activities. ➤ Include explanation of non-negotiable activities. ➤ Make sure activities for service providers are consistent with any contractual requirements they may have with your agency.
<p style="text-align: center;">CHECK YOUR WORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did you engage the family? ✓ Did you include how you would help remove barriers to participating in services? ✓ Are the number of activities realistic for the family? ✓ Are the activities sequenced properly? 	<p style="text-align: center;">CHECK YOUR WORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did you engage the family? ✓ Do the activities explain how you and the other service providers will help the family achieve the changes they need to make? ✓ Do the activities explain how you will monitor progress? ✓ Is it written in easy to understand language?
<p style="text-align: center;">EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Mr. Waters will talk to the Fatherhood Initiatives counselor about how he can develop a strong relationship with his baby. ✚ Mrs. Wilson will participate in the "Help Me Grow" programs to learn ways to encourage her baby's development. 	<p style="text-align: center;">EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ The counselor at Substance Abuse Services will contact Todd within three days of receiving the referral to schedule an initial assessment. ✚ The caseworker will conduct unannounced home visits to ensure that dangerous or hazardous items are not within reach of the children. ✚ The caseworker will talk with the mental health counselor about Mr. Hernandez's attendance and progress in treatment.

How will the Family's Progress be Measured?

COMPONENTS

- ❖ A description of how progress will be measured
- ❖ A description of behavioral indicators of progress

TIPS FOR WRITING

- Describe specific indicators of successful progress towards behavior change.
- Explain how improvements in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, or mental health conditions will be evidenced by the parent's behavior change.
- Use behaviorally observable language.

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ✓ Are your statements specific?
- ✓ Did you use clear language?
- ✓ Do the measures clearly correspond with the desired behavior change?
- ✓ Does it specifically outline how direct observations, interviews, and report from service providers will be used to determine if the behavior change is occurring?

EXAMPLES

- ✚ The caseworker will observe Ms. Warner's interactions with her children during visits. Evidence of progress in learning and using non-physical discipline include:
 - Use of discipline strategies such as time-out, natural and logical consequences, restricting privileges or any other methods learned from the parent mentor.
 - No use of physical discipline such as hitting, punching, spanking, slapping.
- ✚ The caseworker will read progress and attendance reports from Louis' counselor and service providers. Good progress will be indicated by:
 - The counselor describing Louis as actively participating in counseling sessions, sharing his emotions, activities, thoughts, and worries openly in sessions.
 - Louis attending all scheduled appointments with his counselor.
 - Louis following his treatment plan.

When should the Family's Progress be Measured?

COMPONENTS

- ❖ An explanation of when progress will be reviewed during the caseworker's interactions with or on behalf of the family
- ❖ An explanation of the frequency of formal review process

TIPS FOR WRITING

- Measuring progress at logical times, such as during home visits, or during visits between the children in placement and their parents.
- Include the frequency of each measure (both informal and formal).

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ✓ Is the information specific?
- ✓ Does it stipulate when and how frequently progress will be measured?

EXAMPLES

- ✚ Caseworker will review written reports from the substance abuse counselor monthly.
- ✚ Caseworker will observe interactions between the children who are in relative placement and their parents during every parent-child visit.
- ✚ The case plan and services will be reviewed every 90 days.